

THE MOST MISERABLE MAN IN TOWN.

Mr. Meinecke's ex-Wife
a Morphine Fiend, Dogs
His Steps and Threatens
to Shoot Him at Sight.

The most miserable, wretched, unhappy, helpless man in the Greater New York is C. William Meinecke, president of Meinecke & Co., wholesale dealers in drug-gists' sundries, at No. 257 Greenwich street.

Mr. Meinecke is in constant fear of being killed or maimed. Every waking hour that he spends is as full of dread as was the life of Alexander III. when the nihilists were on his track day and night.

The law is absolutely useless as a means of protection for Mr. Meinecke. We might as well be living, as far as he is concerned, in a state of anarchy. A relentless, infuriated woman is on his track, having sworn that she would either kill him or disgrace him for life with vitriol. Because of a peculiar combination of circumstances he is compelled to endure this state of constant menace without hope or prospect of relief. The woman who pursues him is his former wife, Julia Meinecke, from whom he secured a divorce a few months ago in the State Court.

Mr. Meinecke was formerly a healthy, happy, cheerful man, who took life easy and had a good time. Now, since he is continually dodging evils that he cannot see, blows that may come without warning, he has grown thin, furtive, nervous and melancholy. He never goes out except on business errands, never goes to the theatre or any other place of amusement, and never walks the streets without watching on all sides to see if the woman who has sworn to do him evil is not in sight. There is probably no other case like his in this country, if in the world.

GUARDS TO PROTECT HIM.

At all hours of the day and night Mrs. Meinecke is likely to swoop down on her victim. So far he has escaped because of the precautions he takes to surround himself with guards and spies, who warn him of the approach of the woman and enable him to lock himself in seclusion.

However, though she has never been able to come upon him face to face, Mrs. Meinecke has managed to keep things warm for her ex-husband. She has visited his place of business a score or more times, and left mementos in the shape of broken window panes, smashed crockery and other little trifles. She has invaded the neighborhood where he lives with his parents and his two children, in Jersey City, at all hours of the day and night, threatening to shoot and defying policemen and citizens to drive her away.

Finally, she amuses herself by writing him two and sometimes three letters a day containing threats of death, destruction and carnage. Most of these letters have special delivery stamps, so that there may be no delay in their reaching the unfortunate man.

"Am I worried to death by this persecution?" Mr. Meinecke repeated, wearily, when he was interviewed yesterday by a reporter for the Journal; "well, I suppose a man can get used to anything, and in a measure I am getting used to going through life with a sword suspended over my head. I have tried to engross myself in my business and to forget, if I can, in my work the trouble that haunts and threatens me.

"Except when I am asleep, I am never free from apprehension. As I walk along the streets I don't know at what moment this infuriated woman may spring out at me with a bottle of vitriol or a revolver. I always sleep with my eyes wide open. So far I have been lucky enough to escape her, and I look to the future for some sort of settlement which will give me a reprieve.

"The story of it?"

MEINECKE'S STORY OF WOE.

Mr. Meinecke smiled in a sad, far-off way. "It's a simple story enough. I guess there are many like it, but the consequences have never been so appalling in any other case, as far as I know. I married the present Mrs. Meinecke about four years ago, under circumstances that it is not necessary to go into. We had two children, girls, the eldest of whom is about four years, and the youngest about two. We got along very well together for a couple of years.

"Mrs. Meinecke had a peculiar disposition, which at times made her as savage as a tiger, and at others as gentle and affectionate as a child. She was a divorced woman, having divorced her husband, who was a respectable business man in this city, and whose name I have always carefully kept out of the newspapers. Her family is respectable and well-to-do. Their names, too, have never figured. It is sad enough that my family and myself should have all this notoriety, without pulling others into it who are innocent.

"I discovered in the latter part of 1893 that my wife was addicted to the morbid habit and that she drank to excess. I also found that when I was away from home she received other men. Then I determined to get a divorce, and my troubles began. I had no difficulty in getting enough evidence a dozen times over to secure an absolute divorce. I told her what I had done and that I was going to sue, and suggested that we take the case before a referee in order to avoid scandal and notoriety.

"She knew she was guilty; she knew the evidence I had, but she said no; if I insisted on suing for a divorce I could sue in open court, where twelve men might pass upon her guilt, and where the newspapers would have full accounts of it.

"She said she would pull me down with her in disgrace, if she had to be disgraced herself, and that is the keynote to my present terrible embarrassment. She does not care what comes to her or to our children, so long as she can disgrace and ruin me. Well, after long delays, the divorce suit finally came to trial, as she insisted it should, before a jury of twelve men. I presented only enough evidence to get the

divorce, holding back any revelations that would have added to her shame.

"Long before the actual trial began she managed to get the case into the newspapers, and gave it out that I was persecuting her; that I wanted to get rid of her in order to marry another woman. I had always provided for her, and continued to do so until the court, on the verdict of the jury, granted me a decree, but she told the reporters, in order to embarrass me in my business and among my acquaintances, that I had left her to starve, while I was rolling in wealth and luxury. Then, when the trial came, and we met face to face in the court room, she burst out at me, again and again threatening before the judge to shoot me, that she would kill me and kill herself.

SHE SMASHED THINGS.

"When I was free and she had no longer a claim on me her warfare became more and more pronounced. I went with my children to live with my people in Jersey City, as I did not care to remain in New York. A few days after the decree was granted she came to my place of business, and when they told her I wasn't in she began to smash things generally, and finally took an iron bar and broke out a window and flung it downstairs. She was arrested, but I could not appear against her.

"Why? Everybody would have said that I was persecuting the woman; that I wanted to send her to prison to get rid of her. The fear of public opinion made such a proceeding impossible. I had had enough of that, when she spread the story of my neglect and persecution broadcast.

Then, too, there was a feeling that I could not rid myself of the feeling that I had loved her, and that she was the mother of my children. So, for their sakes, I had a desire to send her to prison, and I remained away from the Police Court.

"The judge discharged her with a lecture the next morning. In a few days she was at it again. This time she came as before to my office, and demanded that I should see her. She rushed into the private office, and when she found my desk empty she dashed things about and created as much havoc as she could. When they finally forced her outside, she took her shoes off, and threw them into the place, and executed a perfect war dance.

"And so it has gone on, day after day, week after week, with visits not more than two or three days apart, and threatening letters at the rate of from one to three a day. When she is sober and free from the influence of morphine, she gives me a few hours' rest, but it doesn't last long, and then she is back again, raising a tremendous row and causing a scandal.

MARRY AGAIN? NO, NO!

"Her mania seems to be that I am going to marry again, and that, she says, she is bound to prevent. I have no more idea of marrying than I have of dying to the moon. Nothing on earth could induce me to marry again. I have had enough." And Mr. Meinecke looked as if he meant it.

"But she insists that I am, and that I shall not live in consequence. "Last Friday morning, a week ago, she turned up over in Jersey City at 6 o'clock, and raised a disturbance at my house, demanding to be admitted, threatening to shoot me and my mother and kick the door in and various other things. Policemen and citizens tried to coax her to go away, but she refused, and finally they arrested her. As usual, she was discharged next morning with a lecture. She promised as she always does to leave me alone; but that is all that it amounted to; for the next day she was back again and went through the same performance. I am frequently compelled to stay here at night to look after business matters, and, knowing this, she has been in the habit of coming around here and trying the door to see if she could get in while I was alone. So far she has not succeeded.

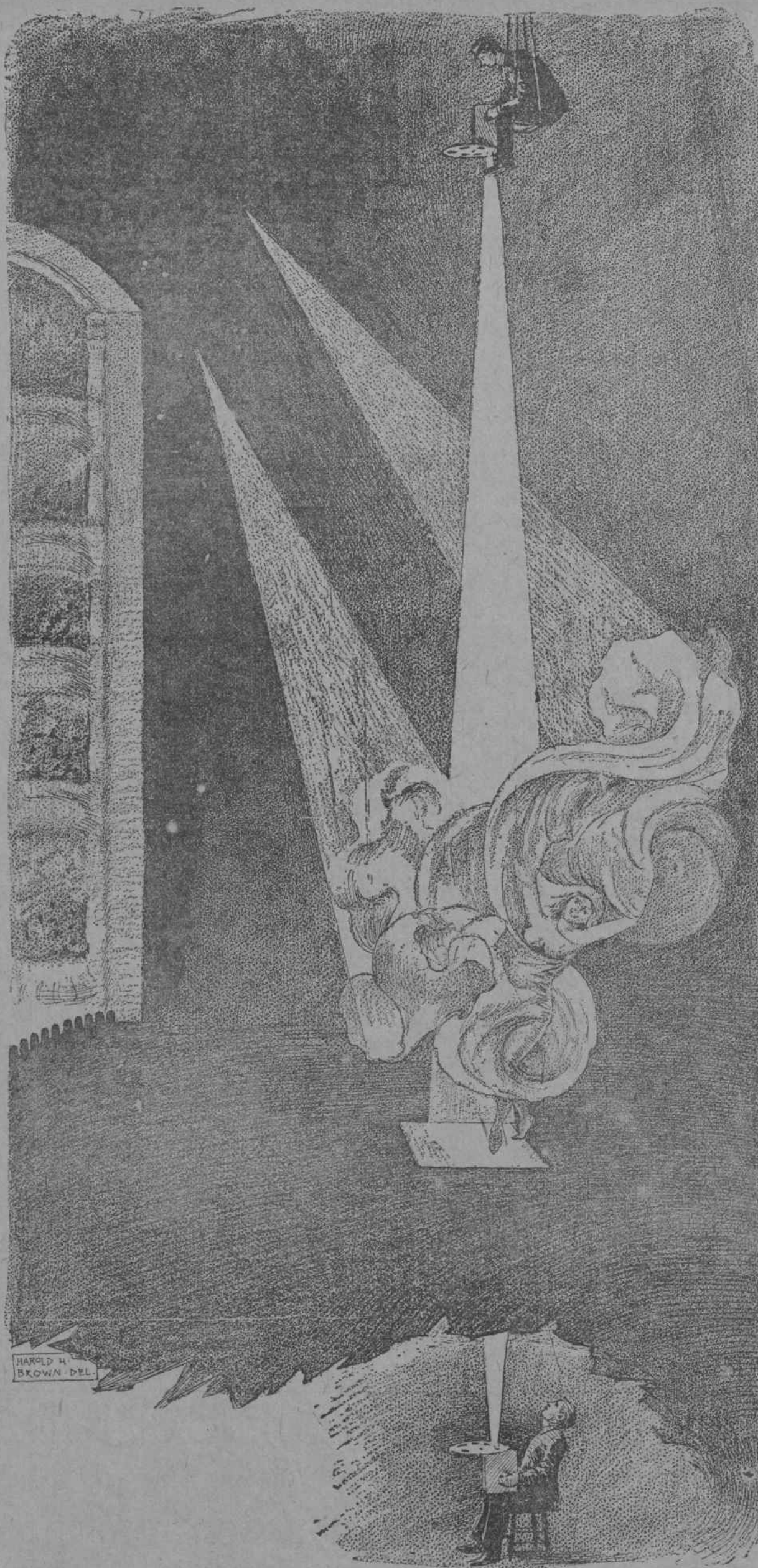
"The climax came last Sunday morning, when she jumped from the platform of the Elevated road at One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street and Third Avenue, at a moving train, declaring that it was my bridal car, and that I was with a new wife, and that she was going to kill me. They arrested her, as I saw by the newspapers, and took her to Bellevue, where she now remains under observation.

"I haven't been near there, and I don't mean to go unless they send for me, and then I will tell them what I know. In my opinion she is insane at times from excessive use of alcohol and morphine, and I might have her committed to an asylum as a disorderly person. But there it is again. Instantly, if I did that, or attempted to do it, there would go up the cry of persecution, and she is such a shrewd, plausible, clever woman that she would make everybody believe I was wronging her.

"So I prefer to let things drift and take my chances. I hardly suppose that they will hold her in the asylum, because I know how extremely plausible she is, and how glibly she promises to go away and leave me alone. She has promised again and again to go to Chicago, where she has property and friends, but that was only to get out of the various scrapes with the police, and the promises did not last over night.

"I am sincerely, genuinely sorry for her, in spite of all that I have been compelled to suffer at her hands; but I know that it is useless to try to reform her, because I have tried and tried. I know, too, that she will never leave me alone, and that I am likely at any moment to be shot or disgraced for life, perhaps blinded with vitriol."

Dr. Allen Fitch, who has Mrs. Meinecke under observation at Bellevue, said yesterday to a reporter for the Journal that she was simply suffering from acute alcoholism, so far as could be at present judged, and that even if she were sent to an asylum she could not be held there more than a couple of months. The superintendent would then be compelled to discharge her as cured, and she would be in a position to begin all over again in her warfare on her husband.



How the Lights Are Worked for La Loie. The Curious Mechanism Which Produces the Marvellous Stage Effects.

In the twinkling of an eye every light in the brilliantly illuminated theatre is extinguished. A darkness so intense that it seems as if one can feel it prevail. There is a buzz and murmur of surprise, followed by a silence only interrupted by the man who goes to the theatre when he has a bad cough.

The boys in the topmost gallery essay a few shrill whistles, but they sound uncanny, and the gods join in the silence. The orchestra is heard playing softly, and then weirdly. The expectant audience strains its eyes in the direction of the stage. Then there is a sudden burst, better say a column of golden light, that rises from the stage, and in its midst, like the spout of a sunny fountain, is revealed the artistic, muscular, enterprising and inventive young genius of terpsichore, La Loie Fuller, an American girl, who invented a new feature in amusements, who has set the people of France and England wild with enthusiasm, and whom the management of the Koster & Bial Music Hall gladly pay the queenly salary of \$3,000 per week.

Loie in this first appearance is clad in a flowing gown of black material. For a moment she stands in the column of golden light. She is on a plate of glass 3 by 4½ feet in dimensions. Beneath the stage is one of her small army of mechanics. Miss Fuller's art requires the assistance of twenty-two men skilled in the handling of the myriad lights that are its success. Those men are with her always, and they draw from her a very sung proportion of the \$3,000 weekly.

Then is given the firmament, in which the stereopticon is used, throwing showers

of stars, golden sparks and silvery moon effects upon the waving robes. The act is brought to a close by the dance called "The Lily of the Nile," which brings into play the full possibilities of Miss Fuller's illuminating plant. The streams of light from above and below, and from both sides, meet and blend in kaleidoscope changes. The color scheme defies description. The billowy dress is in the golden sunlight, in the silvery moonlight, in the purple of dawn, in the gray of twilight, fogs and mists arise. At times a pillar of fire seems roaring and blazing before one. Then there is a shower of sparks, a cascade of flame, writhing serpents, a clear blue sky, a gathering storm. Colors change before the eye in a succession of tints that is almost imperceptible.

The little woman is working as no Indian club swinger ever worked to keep the mass of drapery in scientific motion. The men who manipulate the lights work with great speed, but with the precision of a skilled performer on the piano. Every little note in this grand symphony of color must be as correctly struck as chords by a musician.

There is nothing haphazard about it. Every ray of light, change, or blend has been as carefully rehearsed as have been the movements of the little woman down below, who lashes the billows that surround her until they assume the shape of a giant lily, filling the stage. There is a grand, a dazzling display of shifting color, a shower of gold, then a cold, pale light, the giant flower coils, the leaves fall to the floor under La Loie, and then there is the blackness of night.

The audience cheers with delight. La Loie comes out to smile and bow and shake her head, as if saying "No more," and in the meanwhile the men who have for twenty minutes been harder at work than a Paderewski at a piano, are storing their electro-calculi away against the hour of the next performance.

TRUE LOVE AS ANALYZED BY SCIENTISTS.

Dr. Allen Fitch
Declares "Love
at First Sight"
an Impossibility.

Is love insanity?

Dr. Allen Fitch is a great expert on insanity. He is the County Examiner in Lunacy at Bellevue Hospital. Whether or not he is an expert in love has not been determined either judicially or officially, but he was called recently to testify from expert knowledge in order to determine whether or not Daniel Levy's love for Mrs. Harriet Lehman was love, real love, or lunacy.

Dr. Fitch gave it as his opinion that it was lunacy. So did Dr. Allen McLane Hamilton. So did a number of others.

Levy and his friends and witnesses, on the other hand, insisted that his love was the genuine, bona fide article, and that the other side didn't know what love was when they came across it. Be that as it may, Mr. Levy is at present in Ward's Island Asylum because of his love or his lunacy, and the question what love is must be judicially determined before he can get out again, if he gets out at all.

Mrs. Lehman and her husband, who, with the others, say that Levy's love is lunacy, had the lady's unfortunate admirer put in the asylum because he had for fourteen years pressed his suit. Thrashings, curses, threats all failed to dampen his ardor, and Levy was finally hauled before Drs. Fitch and Hamilton, who made out a certificate of lunacy, on which he was committed.

Thereupon Mr. Levy's friends secured a writ of habeas corpus, which was set down for a hearing last week before Justice Bookstaver and a jury in the Supreme Court.

The trial came to a sensational end on Wednesday when Justice Bookstaver discharged the jury from further consideration of the case because one of the jurymen had been approached improperly.

THE COURT QUESTIONS INVOLVED.
This unexpected ending left some very delicate questions trembling in the balance. What is love?

Are the feelings of Levy genuine love or symptoms of lunacy?

A reporter for the Sunday Journal in an endeavor to settle these problems called on Dr. Fitch in order that the doctor might explain where love ends and insanity begins.

"There is no line to be drawn," Dr. Fitch declared. "Love is love; insanity is insanity. The two are never mixed. You might as well confound the emotions of hunger with the sensations resulting from a broken leg. One is an emotion—love; the other is a disease—insanity. Love is the proper normal feeling of a man for a woman, or a woman for a man. The other is an illusion—insanity.

"Jury after jury of alleged intelligent men have found that lunatics who were troubled just as this man Levy is troubled were in love. That alters nothing. They simply didn't know enough to tell the difference."

FINDS A PROSAIC DEFINITION.
"What is love?"

The doctor pulled down a copy of the Standard Dictionary and another copy of the Century Dictionary.

"There," he said, "read that; that's as good a definition as I can give love, or as any man can give."

The reporter read:
"Love—The principle of sympathetic or pleasurable attraction in sentiment and thinking beings; that feeling of predilection or solicitude for, or delight in, certain individuals or classes, principles, qualities or things which excite a strong desire or craving for the welfare, companionship, possession, enjoyment or promotion of its object or objects; the yearning for what is thought to be best in any relation or from any point of view. In its purest and universal form love is regarded in the highest conception of God as the essence of divinity."

"Love—A strong complex emotion or feeling inspired by something, as a person or a quality, causing one to appreciate, delight in, and crave the presence or possession of the object and to please and promote the welfare of that object; the yearning or outgoing of the soul toward what is apprehended and regarded as good or excellent from any point of view or in any relation; devoted affection for or attachment to; strictly applicable to persons. Specifically, such feeling between persons of opposite sex, based on or affected by sexual attraction; the affection subsisting between husband and wife, or between lover and sweetheart."

"Love—Intimate personal affection between individuals of opposite sex, capable of intermarriage; the emotional incentive to and normal basis of conjugal union; to marry for love."

"Love—Animal passion or the gratification of it. A personification of the love passion; also an embodiment of such a personification."

THE LUNACY SIDE OF IT.

"Now, as to lunacy," the doctor went on, after he had given the reporter a full opportunity to digest the definition of the tender passion set down by cold-blooded lexicographers.

"To begin with, it is absurd to say this man Levy was in love with Mrs. Lehman, to confound his illusions—for they are nothing but illusions—with genuine love. He is simply a madman, whose diseased brain, inflamed from some physical ailment, makes him imagine that he loves a woman who has repulsed him for fourteen years—who has never encouraged him. I know no better test that shall determine the difference between love and insanity, insane love, than this.

"Let us take a man who is sane and who loves a woman; loves her as sane men love, as it is only possible to love, for to compare love with the ravings of lunatics like Levy is to prostitute the word. Let us, then, take a man who loves a woman, illegitimately if you will, who loves a married woman, and who is perhaps himself a married man. He sacrifices his home, his business, his reputation, his entire prospects in life, in order to gratify the feeling inspired by this love. He clopes with this

married woman; ruins two families, creates a most horrible scandal and shatters his entire life. Yet he may be sane and do all this. And the test?

"Let the woman with whom he is in love be killed, let the object that inspired him to wreck his whole existence be removed by death, and that is the end of his passion. He is cured. He does not chase illusion. But let Mrs. Lehman be killed to-morrow, and would Levy be cured? Not at all. He would be as crazy as he was before—as he is now. His morbid fancy must seize upon some other woman, or his lunacy might take some other form. What, for the result, Mrs. Lehman's death would in no wise cure him. That is the difference.

"It is only the ignorance of the laymen that makes doubt possible as to Levy's condition. We have hundreds of such cases right along right here in New York. There have been a dozen sensational instances where men have been in 'love' as Levy is said to be in 'love,' and while an intelligent jury could not detect the difference, obvious though it was, between what was 'love' and what was 'insanity.'"

A PARALLEL CASE TO LEVY'S.

"There was a case of De Lar, who was in 'love' with Lispenard Stewart's sister. He persecuted the young woman relentlessly. She never in any way encouraged him, yet he persevered in harassing her attentions upon her. He was an educated Frenchman and had well-to-do and influential friends. After a great deal of trouble he was finally sent to the Insane Asylum, but he escaped three times by bribing an attendant. It is supposed, and so is at large to-day.

"Then there was the case of Bish, who loved William B. Astor's daughter finally gaining admission to the house one night and attempting to kiss her. Her father was sent to an asylum after a long inquiry, and remained there for half a dozen years, when his delusion changed. He ceased to love her, and he was in love with Miss Astor and that she was in love with him, and conceived some other form of delusion.

"There was Christian Faber, the riding master, who was employed in the riding academy at Fifty-ninth street and Seventh avenue, and he fell in love with a married woman who lived in the Navarro flats. He tried again and again to force his way into her apartments, and finally when arrested stoutly declared that his actions were perfectly natural and honorable. The family of the young woman foolishly had him sent to Bloomingdale instead of to a public asylum, giving the impression of persecuting the man, as though they had deliberately conspired to get him out of the way because he annoyed them. They went to him finally and offered to pay his passage if he would go to Australia. He accepted the proposition and was put aboard a sailing vessel, which required six months to make a trip. What was the result? He came back on the same vessel and began all over again. This time they had him sent to Ward's Island, and there he is to this day, I presume.

A CALIFORNIA EPISODE.

"There was Armand, the Frenchman who had been the teacher of Miss Crocker, of California. When she married Mr. Alexander, a lawyer of this city, Armand declared that the young woman loved him and him alone, as he loved her, but that she had been forced by her family to marry Alexander. He followed her incessantly, peered into her carriage window, forced himself into her presence. She detested him, was afraid of him, but he still persisted that she loved him, and was only restrained from doing so by a volume of passion. He was beaten by the husband, thrown out of the house, and treated to other indignities, but they had not the slightest effect upon him. Finally the family had him committed as a lunatic. He was brought out on a writ of habeas corpus, just as Levy was brought out, and the intelligent jury, as usual, turned him loose. Within three months the man was back and had been recommitted by Judge McAdam.

"Here is what Judge McAdam said of the Armand case, where he presided. 'Armand's insanity was on this point, and on that alone, but it was of a dangerous type, with a homicidal tendency, for the natural inclination of such a lunatic is to effect the removal of the obstacle standing between him and his desires, and the manner of doing it is of but little importance to an unbalanced mind. He was a bright, active looking man, fluent in language, and readily convinced of the truth that he was an injured individual; the more deeply he impressed the jury with this fact the more he impressed me with the reverse of it. Within three months after the jury discharged him I had to recommit him.'

"Now," asked Dr. Fitch, after reading this passage from Judge McAdam's pamphlet, "can you see how sharply the line between insanity and love is drawn? How foolish to talk of blending the two."

"Is there such a thing as love at first sight, Doctor?"

"No, sir."

"Then a man who falls in love, or thinks he does, at first sight, is he a lunatic?"

"I cannot pretend to brand any man as a lunatic unless I have an opportunity of examining him. But this thing of love at first sight has no foundation in fact. There may be a sensation at first sight, followed by love, just as we may admire a beautiful horse at first sight, or a fine picture, but love and admiration are two different things."

"How about a man who falls in love with a picture, who becomes smitten with the original of a portrait?"

"Never having seen the original? Never having seen the woman whose countenance he beholds in the flesh? That, too, is impossible. It may be another case of admiration, but not of love. No man can so love and adore a woman whom he has never seen, to whom he has never talked, who has never differentiated between legitimate 'love,' the love that a man conceives for a woman whom he intends to marry and whom he can marry, and illegitimate love, the love a man conceives for a woman whom he cannot marry."

"Yes. The one I should call 'love,' the other infatuation. Yet because a man is infatuated he does foolish and perhaps criminal things. It is in consequence of this infatuation that he is a lunatic. A man who is in love, no matter under what circumstances, is in a sane mental condition of nature. That is the difference."